The Iowa Blind History Archive
History of Blindness in Iowa - Oral History Project
Interview with [Name]
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Jim Witte, Waukee, Iowa
Mike Hicklin
Iowa Department for the Blind, Des Moines, Iowa
2-9-2011

Mike Hicklin: Today we're interviewing Jim Witte from Waukee, Iowa. We're interviewing at the Iowa Department

for the Blind here in Des Moines. It's approximately 1:15 pm and the date is February 9, 2011. My name is Mike Hicklin. Jim and I worked together for many years at the Department; are both now retired. This interview is part of the Iowa Department for the Blind's History of Blindness in Iowa oral history project. Jim, do I have your consent to record this interview?

Jim Witte: Yes.

Hicklin: What would you like to tell us?

Witte: (Laughter) Well, as I was telling you, Mike, before, there's a quick way to get…I'll back up a little bit and say that basically, when we talk about the story of the Iowa Commission for the Blind or the history of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, we're talking about two completely different philosophies of blindness. And, I tell you that the quickest way to get an understanding of what everybody would recognize as a custodial approach, which was the historical thing for centuries. Blind persons were essentially thought of as being helpless, hopeless and hapless, three fine words; and most programs for the blind reflected that. They were custodial. They were care taking. The occupations were very limited. There would be an exceptional blind person who could…who was really in society as a first-class citizen. So, that was…you were talking about the time, you know, the training at the schools for the blind and the sheltered workshops for the blind; very limited opportunities for blind persons and blind persons tended to accept that, since that was what society said was the right thing. And, that was the way it was essentially for

centuries, up until somewhere in the 1940s, and more on into the '50s, that you had what amounted to a real revolution in the field of work with the blind; going from a custodial approach to an approach that said blind guys are ordinary human beings and blindness is not the great tragedy that everybody thinks it is. That blind persons...well, the key thing was that blind persons, this philosophy said that blind persons, if they are given the training and the education and the opportunity, can do most anything they want to in our society. But, that the real handicap of blindness was not in the loss of eyesight; the real handicap was in the misunderstanding that society has held for centuries, and so it's time to change that.

There was a movement among the blind, the organized blind movement, and it's difficult to separate out what happened in Iowa from...you can't just take the Commission for the Blind, or what's now called the Department for the Blind, and deal with that completely separately without recognizing that there was an organized blind movement, a national organized blind movement, which had a tremendous impact on what happened in Iowa; and vice-versa. What happened in Iowa had a tremendous impact on that organization, because the organization is the one that promulgated the philosophy that blindness is a characteristic that could be dealt with in a much more positive fashion, and that the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business. That was all heresy to the centuries that had gone before, but the actual proof of the pudding took place in Iowa. And so, it's very safe to say that a revolution in the field of work with the blind happened in the state of Iowa with what was then known as the Commission for the Blind. There came a time

in Iowa, and maybe across the country, but particularly in Iowa, and people from other states kind of believe this, too; that the programs in the state of Iowa worked so well that people would say that it's bad to be blind, but if you have to be blind then you'd better be in Iowa, and that was the truth.

As I told you before, Mike, and I told several other people that recently, when we've talked about the Commission for the Blind, is that we have in our possession in this building a little black book that has the complete history of the Commission for the Blind from 1925, when it was founded by the state legislature in Iowa. It was started in 1925 and the same person was the director from 1925 to at least 1956; a lady whose name was Ethel Town-Holmes. So, she was the director and there was a three-person Board. An interesting feature of that was that, on that three-person Board, whoever was the Superintendent of the school for the blind, which is located at Vinton, Iowa, was automatically on the Commission Board, which caused, later on down the road, some problems. But, since he was an expert in the field of blindness, why the thinking was certainly he should be on the Board of the Commission. So, anyway to make a long story short, anybody who was really interested, if you can, get the little black book because it has all of the minutes of all of the meetings that the Commission for the Blind held between 1925 and probably 1956. All written by Mrs. Holmes herself. She typed them, the minutes, and they're there for everybody to read. And, they are probably the best description you'll ever run across of what constituted a custodial approach to dealing with the problems of blindness.

Hicklin: Would you tell us the story of the contact with the Dean of the law school at the University of Iowa and Mrs. Holmes?

Witte: Yeah, well that's a good example of what you'll find in the old minutes. The Commission for the Blind was doing some things. We had a small vending program and we had a large Home Industries [Correction: Industry] program. Most blind people were working in their own homes making rugs or weaving or hemming or whatever, and once in a while somebody would go on to school, college, and, you know, there were some Chiropractors who did well; that seemed to be a good field. But, the story that really indicates this agency's approach to the problems of blindness had to do with the fact that there was a blind guy graduating from the Iowa…from the College of Law at the University of Iowa. The Dean of that college wrote this agency and said, "So and so was graduating and he's at the top of the class. We would hope that you could help him find suitable employment." Bear in mind that this is the top graduate of the University of Iowa School of law, for college law, and this agency's director responded by saying, "It's very difficult for individuals like that to find their place and we don't encourage people to go into those kinds of fields, but what we can do, at this point, is we can help him find a job. Our placement man will help him find a job at Ankeny." This was during World War II, and there was a plant or something up here at Ankeny and, of course, during the Second World War they would take…they were looking for workers, so they were willing to take on blind guys, and there were a number of blind guys who were then employed at that…so, but this was what this agency would then offer this young man who

had gone through probably seven years of college and was a leading graduate. And what he was going to be offered by the agency was some assistance in getting a job at an industrial plant, which speaks a whole lot to what kind of expectations the agency was willing to offer blind persons, who didn't expect much. That's what most blind people got, was not much.

The whole little black book is a recording of whatever progress might have been made. There was some progress in the vending program, not very much. Most people who got help from the Commission for the Blind wound up doing what was part of the Home Industries [Correction: Industry] program. Other states...for some reason, Iowa was able to avoid having a sheltered workshop for the blind. Most states had them. So that, by and large, was the best thing that many blind people could get, newly blinded or long-time blind...would be a job in a sheltered workshop doing manual kinds of things, simple kinds of tasks, and being paid certainly sub-standard salaries and very often those places also had what they called homes for the blind, where single blind persons could also live. It was a very custodial approach. Iowa, somehow or another, never had a sheltered workshop; though there was, and the little black book will bring that out, too...there were times when blind guys would kind of organize and ask to have a sheltered workshop, because it was better than nothing one would guess. (Laughter) So, but Iowa avoided that. As a consequence of not having that, most of the people who would have been in a sheltered workshop were in their own homes. And, the Commission was kind of a central place for finding raw materials for people to weave and to make rugs and to do sewing kinds of things. The Commission would provide the

raw material, and in some cases, would get the finished products and sell them. The people would be paid piece work, five cents or whatever. In some respects, we were…if there was an advantage to the sheltered workshops, they weren't going to get it in Iowa, but they did have this home…And so, for many years the Home Industries [Correction: Industry] program was the largest program that the Commission had. In those days, also, we didn't have library service like you got…If you were blind in Iowa you got library service from the state of Illinois. Anyway, and there was no such thing as the training facility, except that…and this is an interesting feature I think. Somewhere along the line, the school for the blind began to offer a summer program in conjunction with the Iowa Commission for the Blind. So that, the facility in Vinton had places for people to stay and had people who would instruct, so that they ran the summer program for a number of years and basically, it was better than nothing; except, again, that the people who went there at the school for the blind, and the adults in the summer time, were taught the kinds of things that blind people were supposed to be able to do. I mean, they taught weaving and chair caning and those kinds of things.

Hicklin: Broom making.

Witte: So, if you were…so, if you became blind lets say when you were…Incidentally, the kids, people born blind…when they went to the school at Vinton they got a good academic education but their shop courses consisted of the same kind of thing, broom making things that you could do with your hands. The only, probably, really good thing was they also had a chance to learn piano tuning,

which was at that time kind of a stereotype occupation for blind guys.

15:00

Witte: Anyway, that was what was available for newly blinded adults, were these summer sessions. So, they would come out of there with the same probably kind of expectations that they went in with. "Well, there's not much I can do. I can't really get out there and compete in the world." And, that continued on even though the Iowa Commission for the Blind began its revolutionary endeavor in 1958. The school for the blind, which was a different story, lagged behind all the time, and there was ill feeling between the administrators of the school for the blind and the administration of the Commission for the Blind, because the Commission for the Blind kept saying the school for the blind was doing the wrong thing to these guys, to these young guys who could be learning, so that they could compete in the world. So, anyway, how you put that all together is beyond me. Any time you have any other questions, Mike, get in.

Hicklin: With that summer program that you were talking about, was that something strictly for adults?

Witte: It was.

Hicklin: Was that intended to be kind of a mini-orientation kind of training program, something that was preparing people to work or something that was preparing people for staying at home, or was it just something to occupy their

time during the summer as a custodial sort of thing; or how would you characterize that?

Witte: I think that there was no…well, the concept of the Orientation Center, or some places they were called rehabilitation centers, was not entering into that picture. It was an effort, I think, to help people who became blind as adults. Sometimes it was described as the program that would help you to learn to be blind; learn to be blind covers the whole thing. You could take some Braille lessons there. They didn't have any mobility training, because the long, white cane, which became a standard thing in Iowa, was not known anywhere in the country; except, the blinded veterans after World War II, which is a different story, were the guys who developed this kind of mobility, but that did not happen at the summer programs. The guys went there, the adults, and they learned Braille and probably one of the big things that was, maybe, good was that they could associate with other blind guys and learn that the world wasn't…that they weren't the only ones out there who were in bad shape. They didn't learn anything that said to them you should be in good shape. They learned the skills of blindness, activities of daily living. One of the crucial ones is mobility, and they didn't get that, but they got Braille and I'm sure they got some homemaking skills. Most of their day was probably spent learning those kind of hand crafty kinds of things that were stereotypical occupations, chair caning, and so on. But, the notion there was that they should be able to go on, and maybe they would put in a couple summers and then be able to either get something from the Home Industries [Correction: Industry] program, or if by some odd chance they had the ability to get on their own,

they'd do that. I'm not saying it was necessarily a bad deal, except that it came, again, from what essentially was a custodial approach.

Hicklin: How did folks in that era travel, get around from point A to point B? Did someone basically lead them, or was there short canes being used, or just kind of grope the wall and feel as you go?

Witte: Almost all of those guys carried the crook cane, the short, crook cane. The white cane, which was a symbol of blindness, but it certainly was not a tool that was of any consequence. When you became blind you could have one of those canes, and should have one, because if you're out in the street, were outside, it's going to identify that you are a blind person. As far as being able to get around, it was the rare individual, again, most people wound up, newly blinded people, wound up being on somebody's arm. There was really no independent mobility. Some of the younger people, who were blind from birth on their own, if they had some get up and go, would go on their own without a cane. I can remember Kenneth Jernigan, who was the...who became the director. He grew up as a blind kid in Tennessee and he would tell about, as he grew up, he learned about the white cane thing and somehow or another it got tied in to a notion of helplessness, that who had white canes were blind guys who stood on street corners and waited for somebody, or were blind beggars. Begging was kind of a big thing, once upon a time for blind guys. So that, he absolutely refused to use a white...when he was given one of those canes he absolutely refused to use it.

So, probably most of the younger guys who had some ambition, been blind all of their lives, would say, "No, no stay away from me; I don't want any part of that!" They would, if you work at it, you can get around pretty well without a cane, and so those guys did by using their hearing well, and whatever other senses they could get into play. They could do that and then they would get around. But, to the average newly blinded adult, there was nothing. By and large, he was going to want help.

So anyway, those summer programs occurred for a number of years. The black book, again, will show you the approach. Here, these are adult guys coming to the summer school and in that black book there's a letter, two letters, one from a lady who was probably in her 20s or 30s coming for summer session at the school, and there was a response from the Commission for the Blind, who was sponsoring her, or whatever. And, she said in the letter that questions about what could she do on weekends and what were the social activities, in other words, what am I going to do for a social life. And, the response from the Commission for the Blind is, "Well, there will not be any mixture of the sexes and there will not be any social activities to speak of, and be sure all of your clothing is marked." The response of the Commission was basically that, "Hey, who do you think you are? You're not going to go there to have a good time. We're going to separate the sexes," and so on, which was standard practice at the school for the blind. That program continued for several years. I'm sure it did some good. Ultimately though, of course, I don't know what caused it, but there were some blind guys who became very dissatisfied with the fact that the Commission really wasn't doing anything for anybody very much; and, apparently there

were protests among some blind guys talking to the legislators and whatever, and all of that led to Ethel Town-Holmes' ultimate resigning after 30 some years.

Hicklin: She did that roughly in 1956?

Witte: I think about that time, yeah. We'll say 30 years because, and I'm not sure on my years there, but pretty close. She left and there was a man named Malcolm Jasper, who came from Kansas or Nebraska. I think he had run an agency in one of those states, but I'm not sure. Anyway, he came and got the job as director. He lasted, I think, less than a year, and the only thing I could ever hear was that he left mostly because of health problems. And, he had made a little stab at changing things to some…up until, well for instance, one of the things that he did was that he established a office in Cedar Rapids. Here-to-fore, everything had come out of Des Moines, but he established an office at Cedar Rapids and he hired another Home Teacher. I think up to that point, I think, the Commission had one for the whole state of Iowa, had one Home Teacher. Had a budget of $50,000, maybe one Home Teacher, probably one Rehab. Counselor.

Hicklin: Maybe $500 back in those days.

Witte: So anyway, he made a stab at that change and he established that office in Cedar Rapids. He put a Counselor and a Home Teacher there. That's where Ruth Schroeder, our old friend, started working for the Commission as a Home Teacher. But, then Dorothy Kirsner was on the Commission Board by that time. She was a leader in the

Jewish Sisterhood or temple, what was it called…Jewish temple, Jewish temple sister or something? [Correction: Jewish Temple Sisterhood]

Hicklin: I don't remember.

Witte: But, it was the Jewish ladies did a great deal of Brailling, of volunteer Brailling. And, she had Brailled some books for Kenneth Jernigan, who was a avid reader, while he was in California. And so, he was coming through here on his way to Tennessee, I guess, and he stopped to see her, so the story has it. She said, "Well, you know, we're looking for a new director at the Commission;" and the rest is history. He said that he'd be interested, and so he came in 1958 and just in a relatively short time blew the place apart, and started everything on a different track. It's safe to say, that in some respects, it was probably good that the program for Iowa, which ranked 48th out of the 48 states at that point, it may have been to the benefit of all concerned that it was kind of a nothing program, because he was able to start from scratch; he didn't have to undo anything. He just could clean the table and start out brand new, which was to his advantage and to the state's advantage.

Hicklin: He was working in some type of a rehab. setting in California at the time?

Witte: Yeah. California had a pretty good program for the blind, part of which stemmed from the fact that a guy named Jacobus tenBroek was a blind guy, but professor at the University of California at Berkley. And, he had started, in 1940, the organization of the National Federation of the

Blind. He was the leader in this deal, saying that, "For God sakes, blind people have been put down for centuries and it's time that stops, and it's time that our programs for the blind get serious about education and get serious about rehabilitation!" So, he was the father of this very positive approach to problems of blindness.

Okay, Jernigan was working in California at the California School for the Blind [Correction: California Orientation Center] and it apparently was a fairly promising school for the blind. The agency for the blind had the sheltered workshop in Oakland, California and they also then established what was called the Oakland Orientation Center for the Blind, which was a program for newly blinded adults. It was a residential center. They could come there and take classes in the skills and techniques of blindness, and the staff was based on tenBroek's philosophy that this is going to be a drastic change from the past.

30:00

Witte: Jernigan took the job as a teacher there and mostly his teaching was discussing philosophy of blindness, and problems of dealing with individuals who were new at dealing with blindness. Of course, he was a devotee of tenBroek's, became kind of tenBroek's right-hand man. I remember tenBroek didn't have anything to do with agencies, but he certainly was the guiding force behind the organized blind movement, and Jernigan was very active in that. He had success in California.

Well, I'll tell you a story. I don't know how you can shorten this up, but this may explain what I'm trying to say. When I was hired to work for the Commission for the Blind in

1959, I couldn't tell a white cane from a flag pole and I knew nothing about blindness.

Hicklin: Right.

Witte: So anyway, Kenneth Jernigan, for whatever reason, decided to hire me and he gave me a demonstration of the travel with the long, white cane, because he had one when he came to Iowa. He had one and he knew how to use it, and he knew how people could be taught to use it. So, he hired me and then he said, "The thing to do that you're going to do, if you want this job, you'll go to Oakland and you'll go through that Orientation Center out there; and if you think you can handle that, and the reports I get from those people are any good, when you come back, then we'll put you to work." So, I'm going to California and he gives me a list of names. He said, "Here are some people that, when you're there…I want you most of the time, of course, to be learning how to travel and this guy, Larry Lewis, is a good travel teacher. They also have a guy out there who was part of the program at the Hines Veteran's Hospital in Chicago, who is an expert on travel, too, and they have a good Home Ec. teacher, her name's Sally Jones, I think, and they have a Braille teacher and they have a heck of a good shop teacher, and I want you to learn from those guys. But very seriously, I want you to go see tenBroek, of course, who is teaching at Berkley." And a lady, I can't think of her name now…who had been like a third-grade teacher. She became blind and she went through the Center and he helped her convince the school district to take her back. So, she was teaching. There was this Jack who was the electrician. There was a Rehab. Counselor in San Francisco, across the bay from

Oakland, and then there was Manuel Urena, who was practice-teaching at the University of California at Berkley.

So, I had those names and I called him after I'd been there a week and he said, "Okay, which of those people have you met?" I was giving him a report on what I was doing at the Center. I said, "Well, I haven't met any of them." He said, "Now, I'm serious about that," he said, "You got to meet those people and you got to get to know them;" so, okay. So, I began doing that and I realized that after seeing a couple of those guys in action, that was like…Onvia Ticer was the…Her story was that she had been a third-grade teacher and became blind, so the school district didn't want to take her back; but she was persuasive and Jernigan was persuasive, so they took her back. And, the first year parents were asking to take their kids out of her classroom, but the school toughed it out and by the time she was into her second year, people were asking to have their kids in her class. She was just one heck of a good teacher. So, I spent a day with her and the classroom was marvelous. She had those kids organized and they did all kinds of things for her and they just loved that. Like, get the stuff out for the playground and take the names of lunch people and the milk people, and all that stuff that those teachers do. She had committees that do that. This committee would get that and they'd take it down to the front office and they just loved doing that. It was just a very fun classroom to be in. She was just a heck of a good teacher. So, anybody who would have watched her would have said, "Wow, yeah," which is what I said.

Well, obviously a blind person can teach. And, the guy with the electrical thing…watching somebody in a housing development where they have, you know, there's ditches

and there's lumber; but every house, apparently as it comes to a point that, you'd know better than I would, that there comes a point where the electricians come in and they do the wiring.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: So, that's what he did. He came in and he had the diagrams or whatever, so he had his old job back. The guy in California or in San Francisco who was a Rehab. Counselor, I went over to see him and he trucked me all over San Francisco, because he had the heart of the city, mostly, was his territory. He certainly didn't have any trouble getting from here to there. I had trouble keeping up with him, but obviously he was doing the job. So, what I came out of there, finally, was with the understanding that yeah, whatever the teaching at the Center is really "it." It really works; this thing really works. So, he said to me afterwards, he said, "I'm glad that you learned some skills out there, but the important thing, as I kept telling you, was that you had to have the experience with these guys, blind guys, to see that we're not just talking through our hat."

So, he was here in '58 and he wants to get going, but there was a small budget. And so, he has to work with the legislature to get more money, so he can hire more people. He's got plans for a building. He had plans drawn up for a separate building he wanted the state to build, which would have cost some, over a million dollars. And, here was this little agency, which the state of Iowa barely knew it had. It had been moved from two or three places over in the capitol building and there was an old high school, Amos Hiatt High School over there on Court, south of the capitol building,

south of what is now the Lucas Building. There was an old school that had been condemned, but it became part of the state office setup. And, the Commission for the Blind, when I came to work, was housed in that place and it had three or four classrooms. The Commerce Commission, which was at that time headed by Harold Hughes, which was a fortunate thing, because he and Jernigan became good friends and Hughes became governor and we're off and running! So, they were housed there. The Highway Patrol was housed in that building. Well, then the Highway Patrol got moved to a house across the way from us, temporarily. And, every time they moved, Jernigan would say, "I want those rooms." He hired a couple more Counselors and then I was hired. When I came back from California he said, "We're going to start the Orientation Center." I barely knew what the Orientation Center was, except I knew what the Oakland one was. And, this Center became a carbon copy of the Oakland Orientation Center, because that one had worked and was working really well. That was the mechanics. He's working with the governor and the legislature to get more money and he's getting it.

This building…the YMCA leaves this building in 1959, I think, and he talks the state into buying the building because he didn't think he was going to get them to build the billion [Correction: million] dollar building; but they were interested in buying this building, I think for what, four-hundred thousand dollars, something like that, four-hundred and fifty, maybe. So, all of a sudden from going to being a poverty-stricken little agency that nobody knew anything about, why, we're coming on. And, we start with three students; he wants to start the Orientation Center fast. Well, we didn't have a building, really. We had some offices

over at the old Amos Hiatt Building. We had no place for students to live, but anyway, we go ahead and he…We got these three ladies who come to town…three young women and we get them rooms at the YWCA, temporarily. We use an office building over in the old Amos Hiatt Building for Braille and typing classes, and we use Jernigan's house for Home Ec. So, I'm driving around, you know, driving to Jernigan's house (Laughter) and Ruth Schroeder…Ruth Schroeder and I are the two teachers, at that point. She would teach Home Ec. and I would teach travel while we were out there in that residential area. And then, we'd come back and Ruth would teach a little Braille and a little typing and I would teach more travel, and that's how it went.

So, when Ted Hart told you he joined that motley crew; that's right. We were still…He was living in some apartment some place, anyway, because he was going to Tech. Well, then we found a lady who had a large apartment, who worked at the Commission. She had a large apartment up near Drake with several bedrooms, so that's where the female students went to live for a while. By that time, the new YMCA is open and the male students come in gradually, wind up living at the YMCA and they would come from the new "Y" up to the old "Y." In January, I think, of '60, or somewhere in there…early that winter, we're into this building. I don't know…do you want me to tell the story of moving into this building?

Hicklin: Sure! If you recall some of the details of the fire…

42:33
(End of Recording 1)

(Beginning of Recording 2)

Witte: The move and the fire, maybe, they weren't too far apart. Is that what we should talk about?

Hicklin: That's kind of the next thing, I think, yeah.

Witte: So, we had this little Orientation Center program going. The students were beginning to come in and there were more...There was quite a lineup, or quite a list of people, at that stage of the game that we were talking about having coming in to the Orientation Center. So, one of the first things that happened was that before we moved into this building, was that Urena, who I had met out in California, came here to be the director of the Orientation Center. So, then there was Manuel and Ruth and I. Manuel was teaching Braille and also running the Center. We had a couple more guys come in; I really can't remember. A guy named Kenny Russell was one of the first men from Waterloo. He had been living at the "Y." The big question, obviously, confronting Jernigan was what are we going to do for a place to have this...We have this Orientation Center and it's functioning more or less, but where are we going to put the thing? (Laughter) He had these grandiose plans drawn up for the building that would also be a residential center. He believed in the residential concept, among other things, because that's what they had in California and it worked.

One thing, I guess, I'll throw in there just to digress a little bit. The California Center also indicated a problem. It was housed in the same building that housed the sheltered

workshop. And, if you think about it, you can see where that might create a problem.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: The newly blinded guys come in here and they're getting fed this new propaganda, particularly from Jernigan and his cohorts, and all of a sudden they're seeing these guys go to work in the sheltered workshop. They're living in the same building with some of the guys who work in the sheltered workshop. But, obviously, the philosophy was taking hold. We visited, over the years, some places where the sheltered workshop still housed the Orientation Center and it had to have a negative impact. I think that was the problem in Kansas…Topeka. The problem backfired some in California, because if you're preaching the new philosophy, the positive approach, and that blind guys can do the average job in the average place of business, then you got to get with it. Then the old sheltered workshop approach is not good, and whatever. You're preaching that and you make some believers.

One of the things that happened out there was that in sheltered workshops, probably to this day, if it's a two-story building they will have a gate at the head of the stairs. I think if you go to the Kansas sheltered workshop, to this day, where they're working on the second floor there are gates that swing shut automatically at the top of the stairs, so a blind guy won't fall down the stairs. Well, in Oakland they had this gate and the newer breed of students one night got busy and took off the damn gate, and the next morning guys were falling down the stairs. So, there was a big uproar over that. They had to explain that, put the gate

back up. But, anyway, so we're going to have a residential…and Jernigan liked the residential concept for a couple of reasons; one of them being that the students are together, and particularly with his intake procedure. And, he didn't miss too many bets; missed none that I knew of. You didn't take in, some places, too; the state will do that. They'll take in, like, 15 students at one time. He said that was to be avoided at almost all costs. You bring in people individually, so that you have this group of 15 people, some of who have been here six months maybe.

Hicklin: Right.

Witte: Therefore, they can have a good impact or a bad impact, whatever, this will be…at least they can have some impact on the newer student. So, he was fond of the residential concept. Plus, that made chances for the staff to work with students…and part of his idea, too, of people living in the building. He emphasized that a great deal…was that they needed to be available and they needed to make some effort to work, particularly with newer students in the building. So, that was key…that we were going to have…that we needed a building that would house the students and have the class rooms and the staff and everything there. So, low and behold, the YMCA built the new building down here on Grand, which is now the old "Y" down there and the old "Y" was standing here. And, he talked the city…he talked the state of Iowa governor and Executive Council and legislators into buying this building. I mean, he sold them a bill of goods as people would say later on, but it turned out to be a heck of a buy at say four-

hundred, four-hundred-fifty thousand dollars. That was just the beginning. So, we come in then.

Now, there was a question getting at some of the ways Jernigan...because Jernigan could operate and he was fast on his feet. When the state bought this building, it did not buy it for the Iowa Commission for the Blind. It just bought it for the state of Iowa and the understanding among some people, whoever they may be, maybe on the Executive Council, that you can't have this little Commission for the Blind organization, which is nothing. We can't give you the 7-story building for god sakes, what's the matter with you? (Laughter) But, see, Jernigan is there, and I don't know whether people really believed him or not, but he's saying that he has architects already hired and they draw him maps and he has his own architectural drawings with tape and whatever, and these architects made it so he knew exactly what was where in this building. And so, he says, "Okay six floor's male students, fifth floor [women], and we've already used up two of the floors, right? And, you're going to have a library. God only knows how much space that's going to take up. It's going to take up a bunch and you're going to have offices for Rehab. Counselors and Home Teachers. We can use that whole building easily." Well, that was quite a bit to chew off, really, but that was his point of view. So, the state authorities, I think, knew that it was his point of view, but it still was questionable as to who was going to control this building. And, he was saying, at the same time, that the Commission for the Blind would have this building and we would have whatever Buildings and Grounds had to do for the state of Iowa, which was all the other buildings; they would not have to do in this building...that it was crucial that the Commission control Buildings and Grounds features, as

you well know, the maintenance and the cleaning and whatever.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: So, nobody really understood why he was pushing that so much, but we learned as we went along. So anyway, the questions aren't settled; they're still debating it as to who's going to be in this building or what part of it.

This is what happened. On a Sunday, oh I guess, maybe on Friday, or whatever, he told me…He asked me and Jim Valiant…Jim Valiant was his Administrative Assistant, a very young, vigorous sort of a guy. We met at Jernigan's office over there and he said, "Okay, this is what we're going to do." "We're going to come down here tomorrow, you two and I, and we're going to mark everything we have." And, we had, by that time, some file cabinets and some desks and chairs, a little furniture not a whole lot, but some. "We're going to mark everything that we have here if its Accounting or whatever, it's Field Operations or whatever, we're going to mark that and then we're going to…I've hired a U-Haul truck, and Monday morning we're going to…and we're going to mark the furniture with where its going to go over there. If it's coming from Accounting, it's going to Accounting here. If it's coming from Field Op., then it's going to go to the second floor;" even though the fire marshals had said nothing above the first floor. "And Administration, it's going to go to what's Administration over there. So, that by the end of the day on Monday we'll have telephone service. The Iowa Commission for the Blind will be officially housed at 524 Fourth Street." So anyway, we did that. Sunday, Jim Valliant and Jernigan and I are at the

old office buildings. We mark all the furniture with masking tape. So, then these were the plans, as I recall them. I think the only place you can check this would be if you get a hold of Jim Valliant; he can either back me up or call me a liar, but I think that he and I were probably the only ones who knew what was really going to happen.

Monday morning, Jernigan had already got the keys to this building because he'd been dickering around saying that he wanted to look it over, and we had come in, he and Valliant and I and a couple other people, and the power was turned off. There was some old electrical wiring hanging here. That's why the fire marshals, I think, were saying nothing above the first floor. Anyway, the plan was this. Valliant would be here. I would go over there to the old office, and I think the staff was supposed to come here. I can't remember that for sure. And, I would load the trucks up. Oh, we must have had staff over there to help load the trucks. We would load the truck up there and probably have to make a couple trips. Jernigan was going to go to the Executive Council, which was meeting that morning in the Capitol building and he was going to ask for permission, or so he said. But, what he was prepared to do was to go there and say, "We have moved; squatter's rights. What are you going to do about it?" (Laughter)

A little side bar, here, is I get over there Monday morning, and at the old Amos Hiatt Building there was a parking lot on the east side of it, and that's where the furniture and everything, which...that was the door to the basement. But, everything had to come down through there and be put on the truck. The parking lot was full of cars and there was a meeting. Harold Hughes, again, was the Chairman of the Commerce Commission, and the Commerce

Commission had a hearing room in the basement, which was a pretty good size room and there was a hearing going on which was very well attended, whatever, it was kind of a controversial thing I guess. So, I called Valliant and I said, "We got problems, because there's no way we can get the truck up here to load the stuff up." So, he apparently ran over to the Capitol building and passed that word on to Jernigan, and Jernigan said, "Tell Witte to go in there. Harold Hughes probably will understand. He's got to clear the way, so we can get that truck in there." So, I went down to the hearing room and the guys, probably two lawyers, they're debating back and forth and Hughes was sitting up on a raised thing and I'm back here behind the crowd thinking, well, how do you do this?

15:00

Witte: So, anyway, I raise my hand and caught Hughes' eye and he motioned me, so I went around and I got behind him and I said, "Mr. Hughes, the Commission for the Blind, as you may or may not know, is moving this morning and we have to do it this morning, and we can't get a truck in here. (Laughter) He laughs a little bit and then he gaveled the thing and said, "Okay," he said, "We're going to take a little recess here for about ten minutes." He said, "Anybody who's parked out here, one or two trucks are going to come in here and load some things." And, that was all there was to it. So, we got the stuff out there and got it over here, by say two or three o'clock that afternoon the Iowa Commission for the Blind was housed at this address! And, Jernigan was in, telling the Executive Council, "We have moved;" and they accepted it.

Hicklin: That's an amazing story!

Witte: It is! It's squatter's rights. He said, "I was a hundred percent sure that once we had moved, they were not going to tell us to move out." Then, I think the argument about the Buildings and Grounds went on for some time, but he ultimately won that. He won that on the basis that this was a complete program. There were going to be students living here, adult students, who were newly blind; and that he had to have control over the entire staff, including maintenance. It wasn't just the Rehab. Counselors who were important or the teachers who were important; it was everybody on the staff had to be in tune with this program. And he said, "You know I'll tell you what will happen is, that students are going to have to do their own laundry and things over there and I just know that some well-meaning maintenance guy is going to say, "Oh, let me do that for you, or let me help you up the stairs." And, I want to be able to say they can't do that and if they do that, I'll fire them." So, that argument carried the day as it should have, and I think that's still the case. That was his thinking. We couldn't live in the building, because then, of course, there was going to have to be major remodeling in any case. So, he's working on that. On fifth and sixth floor we took two rooms, took the dividing wall out so that we...The old YMCA rooms were very small, so we made each one twice as big.

Hicklin: Right.

Witte: Because people would be living here for a number of months at a time and we needed staff apartments for staff,

so all that was built into the plans. The question then was, where do we get the money for all that? It was conceivable that the state, the powers that be, could have said, "Well, that's the end of the game; you got your building. You're just going to have to get along with what you can use there." So, again, it's almost as though it was a good thing that this fire occurred.

Jernigan was out of town some place. I remember hearing it on the news that...seeing it on TV that the fire at the old YMCA building and flames are coming up on the top of the roof. There were two handball courts, or squash ball courts. The building had, God I don't know how many hand ball courts and squash courts, but it had two of them sitting up on top of the roof and the elevator went up there. And, that's where the fire started, either in the elevator shaft or in those...must have been the elevator shaft, electrical thing; terrible fire. The fire trucks were down here pouring water in up on the roof and it was hard to get at the fire, because of the flat roof. It was burning in to the sub-roof structure, and so they had a hard time getting it out. And so, they pump water and pump water. I can't remember who, but anyway, I remember John Taylor, who was the Assistant Director at the time or head of Field Office, he was a blind guy and he was down here when the fire broke out. He and Jim Valliant were in the building when the fire occurred. And, the newspaper mentioned that there was a blind guy in the building who wasn't aware that the place was on fire. Well, Valliant wasn't blind, but he was no more aware than Taylor was, but it sounded better to say there was a blind guy in the building and he didn't know it was on fire, but that's kind of picky, maybe.

Hicklin: Yea, the truth of that was the fire originated on the roof level and…

Witte: Those guys were on the first floor.

Hicklin: Mr. Valiant and…yeah, Jim would have been down on the first floor

Witte: Anyway, then, all of us who heard it on the news we called each other and we came down because the argument was made that this building is poured concrete, so it was pretty safe, but that we could reduce the damage if we could get the water off of those top floors. So, we're busy squeegeeing and loading buckets. And, they ran a canvas down the stairwell out to the front door, and so we're either bucketing water on that or we're sweeping water on it. We spent hours, because there was just an awful lot of water to get rid of and, of course water was coming down through some of the floors through the light fixtures.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: So, it was…The upshot of that was…the bright side of that was that the state, at that point, had to come up with the money to rebuild the roof and while they were doing that, they might as well do the remodeling. (Laughing) So, it worked out that way.

Hicklin: And, I believe the state Executive Council did a resolution, commending Commission staff and students who were helping do the cleanup work to help preserve the building.

Witte: They might have. I don't know I guess…

Hicklin: We still have a copy of that.

Witte: Oh, okay. Well, that's right. We were here and students were here the next day.

Hicklin: Any idea how many students would have been here at that time? Would it still have been a class of four or would that have enlarged to ten or twelve?

Witte: We would have been into ten or twelve. I'm trying to remember who some of them were. Some time during the…of course, they're in here doing the roof, and they began on the remodeling. And, we were using…so, we were in here having classes on the first floor, because it was useable. The recreation room and this room and the log cabin room and where Hauge is now; I was where Hauge is. Manuel Urena was in the log cabin. Somebody was in this room, teaching typing, and Braille was going on out in the Rec. Room. And, the Rec. Room had the high ceiling and it has those little squares and, every once in a while, one or two of them would fall down from the water that had seeped through. I remember Neil Butler…so we had to have at least ten or twelve students. Neil's sitting out there at one of the long tables reading Braille and all of a sudden plop, there comes…and so you never knew when it was going to…And, actually, we put Home Ec. down in the basement, because regardless what the fire marshals said, we had to put the Field Op. up where Home Ec. is now. There was kind of a suite of offices back in that neck of the woods, and that's

where Taylor and Field Op. was located. The Orientation Center had the Rec. Room and down…I don't know what's there now, but at that point, down on the basement on the east side of the swimming pool there was a weight room and there was also a Turkish steam bath room.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: They had one of those little Turkish boxes that you could sit in, you know, and…yeah. But, they had running water down there and some sinks so that's where we put Home Ec. Shop was underway, kind of. And, the shop teacher, who was Don Black [Correction: Hal Cross] at the time, and some of the students made this, I would say, eight-feet long kind of a thing. It was like a centerpiece in a kitchen. It had drawers on both sides. So, that's where you stored all kinds of things. Dorothy…We didn't have any real sinks for washing dishes, so Dorothy Kirsner's husband ran…Johnson Tub Factory, I think. I don't know if it's still in existence or not. That's where old, I can't think of his name, but one of the first guys that we got a job for, was running a sheet-metal press over there, or cutting sheet metal. So, Mrs. Kirsner's husband donates us some of those dish-tub things, which we used for sinks down there in Home Ec.

Hicklin: And, the Center had begun!

Witte: The Center was in business. I have said many times that those years may have been the best we've ever had. I mean, we had all kinds of difficulties to work around, but we worked together and a lot of it was kind of funny. So, you know, it was good. And, a variety of things came out, things

that were available here and decisions. Jernigan made decisions about how this building would be utilized, but also from the standpoint of how it would affect the students. You know, Mike, I'm sure that some of those work benches down in the shop are parts of the bowling alley.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: So, there were a couple bowling alleys down there. There were pool tables up here and there were pool tables downstairs. I always thought that would be pretty good would be the pool tables, but one day all the damn pool tables were gone and the bowling alley. I remember that was being discussed at that stage of the game at that time in our life. Right next door to us, across the alley west of us above that building, there was a bowling alley. It hasn't been there for quite a few years, but he said, Jernigan said, "Nonsense. We're not going to have a bowling alley in this building. Guys will learn a whole lot more by going out of here and going to a bowling alley away from here, and particularly when we have one so close." So, no bowling alley; cut them up. On the second floor was the YMCA's main dining room and kitchen and it was a huge kitchen, one of those commercial things that has the big tubs for mashed potatoes, whatever else. It had big baking ovens and all kinds of things. It was all old stuff, but the question was, do we have a dining room for students? Do we use it as a dining room for students, and we could have…but the answer was, "No, the guys are not going to stay in this building to eat. They're going to go out. They're going to go downtown; going to go to restaurants." So, that was part of

the philosophical approach. It would have been easy to have had a kitchen and a dining room here.

Hicklin: That would have reinforced the custodialism that had been such a part of the agency over the years.

Witte: Yeah. Had the question about…A lot of Orientation Centers, training centers have, they have two students to a room. They use a buddy system and "No," he said, "Absolutely no way. We're not going to have the buddy system, because what will happen with the buddy system is one of them is going to take care of the other one, and we're not going to let that happen." So, all of those kinds of things had to enter in to his approach to making it a really meaningful experience to go through this Orientation Center.

30:00

Witte: Of course, as time went on, the remodeling got under way. This is the time, the '60s, while the remodeling is going on upstairs, that he gets permission to have the library. The Library of Congress finally agrees that this will be a branch of the Library of Congress. And so, we got the big gym over there with the running track above it and the word goes out to the libraries for the blind in the country, that if you have excess books that the Commission for the Blind in Iowa will take them. And, everybody had excess Braille books. No one has room for them, so they just came pouring in here. And, we had a big gym, and the running track. There were hoists, we could hoist books from the floor up to the running track and the running track was filled with books, Braille books. And, I think in July of '60 the first

books were shipped out from here to Iowans. So, no longer would they get books from Illinois. We had always been a machine agency, even in…I think in '36 the Library of Congress did the talking book machines, and so we…the little black book has some interesting comments on that, too. Iowa was to receive, let's say, 98 talking book machines. So, the question is who gets them. You got several thousand blind guys out there, who's going to get these first…and, of course, more machines would be coming. I think the comment was that obviously you wouldn't give them to people who don't read anyway. So, I don't know how that distribution went out but we were the machine agency, but we didn't have the books; that was Illinois' job. So, that's how all of that started. Now, and this might be for another day, another time. If you want another time we could talk about the organization.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: And, what happened with that…but you may have somebody else that knows more about that than I do.

Hicklin: How did this, once the Center was rolling here, how did that impact what was going on at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, with their summer program and their programming that they had for adults? Did there get to be a competition of sorts?

Witte: No, that had ended, I think, anyway. That summer program faded off into nothingness, I guess, I really don't know why. But, well, there was no need for it anymore. We would not have sent anybody up there either. There came to

be, and this gets into a whole new area. Mike, I don't know whether you want to go into it today, but, you see there came to be a tremendous conflict between the school for the blind and the Iowa Commission for the Blind.

A significant thing in that regard is that, for years the field of work with the blind in the state of Iowa really was centered around the school for the blind. The school for the blind was part of the Board of Regents. The school for the blind had a pretty big budget. They had a pretty good academic program up there. So, all the blind kids were going there, you know. As far as the Lions clubs were concerned, who were always interested in sight business, Vinton was it. As far as anybody was concerned, Vinton was it. The Commission for the Blind was kind of a nothing. So, all of a sudden this thing begins to go, and the publicity, Jernigan is really getting publicity. I mean we had, and I'm sure you can find them in the minutes, probably, or around here. We had newspaper coverage that was just fantastic. I mean, Jan Omvig-Gayweth, who you know probably…they spent I think two days of newspaper coverage on her doing the long route. And, there are pictures…I'd meet her on the bridge and we'd talk or whatever, so it was a big splash. It was really good publicity.

So, all of a sudden, the Commission for the Blind is the big name in work with the blind. That's maybe neither here nor there. At the same time that that's occurring, the superintendent of the school for the blind is on the Commission board, and as Jernigan pushes ahead to do things, the superintendent of the school for the blind began to say, "Oh, no, wait a minute;" because, they didn't agree with Jernigan's approach. Not that he was a bad guy, but I mean, he was old school.

Hicklin: Certainly.

Witte: But anyway, so he began to kind of balk some of that. I don't know the specifics, but he began to kind of balk at what Jernigan was pushing for. Apparently, the board meetings became kind of contentious. There were two people that probably this time Jernigan had…well, certainly Dorothy Kirsner was always a friend of his, and whoever else was on…I think maybe Paul Haley, Bill Haley. You remember Paul Haley, probably.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: Bill was his Dad. You might have known him, too. Is this room called the Bill Haley room? One of these rooms around here is; the Rec. Room maybe.

Hicklin: The Rec. Room was.

Witte: Okay, so anyway, Bill Haley and Dorothy Kirsner certainly would have been supportive of Jernigan; no question about that. The superintendent of the school for the blind wasn't. It became, I don't know, you could speculate endlessly about this, I think…that because some people will say, "Well Jernigan was just power hungry," or something. He began to have trouble with the school for the blind, because our library is now going full blast, you know '62, '63 somewhere in there, '64. So, he offers or he wants the school for the blind to use this library facility more than they were using it. We could take books up there, you know, whatever. And, they were saying, "No," they didn't want any

part of that. He offered...This may be one of the things that would be hurtful. He offered to have us help them start a mobility program. In other words, they sent one of their teachers down here to take instructions from me in long cane travel. This guy wasn't a damn bit interested. They didn't need that. And so, they weren't about to enter into the long cane...why, I don't know. You know, it should have been obvious to everybody that it was a good deal. They should have been using it.

To show you what they did up there, when Karen Clausen-Berdard...Karen Clausen became one of the first three students. When she came here, she had been at the school for the blind for twelve years and knew that she'd been cheated. And, one of the things that she really felt cheated about was mobility. She said that the rule up there was...this gets off into another area, too, but the rule up there was that if you were totally blind you could not leave the campus by yourself. You either had to have...well you had to have a partial. See, the partials could leave the campus by themselves, because they could see some, right? What I'm getting into here is obviously up there, there were two classes of people; there were blind guys and then some that weren't, so blind and the ones that weren't so blind had advantages that the totally blind guys didn't have. That had to be hurtful!

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: And, she made no bones about that being hurtful. She couldn't...She could have gone downtown. I mean she took cane travel here and she was an excellent cane traveler in the city of Des Moines. She could have probably

done it without a cane, but she wasn't allowed the opportunity up there. So, anyway and then, of course, the concept of sleep shade training; they weren't even going to think about that, because…What was the term they used? Well, they had the sight saving program. Remember that term? If you had some sight, the emphasis was on sight saving, that you would learn Braille only as a last resort. If you had any sight, the thing to do was to use that to the max. So, there were people coming out of there who discovered after they got here that they would have been more efficient if they had learned Braille there. Now, they had to learn Braille. They could have learned it there all that time, but they were sight-savers and they could use large print. The rest of the world didn't provide too much large print.

So, anyway…those kinds of things are going on at the school for the blind and, of course, they didn't…our shop program was altogether different, and so the upshot of that was that Jernigan finally said, "Enough's enough!" And, the argument that he made was that the school for the blind is one state agency; its part of Regents and that's one part of state government. The Commission for the Blind is a separate entity. How can you justify having a member of one agency sitting on the board of another agency? "It's not right," he said; even though it had been that way for 50 years, or 30 some years [or thereabouts]. But, to change that he had to go to the legislature, because the law specified when the Commission for the Blind was established, "The Commission shall consist of three members, one of whom will be the superintendent of the school for the blind." So, you couldn't just…You had to get the legislature [legislation changed].

So, he lobbied and he hoped to get it done very quickly. You'd have to look it up; don't quote me on this. I'm not sure about this, he had to go through…He had it introduced in the Senate and in the House at the same time. Now, it seems to me that the Senate…It seems to me it was like Senate File One, or some…really early on. And, the Senate banged it through right. Now, the House…suddenly the representative from Vinton got up and said, "Wait a minute, you're not going to do this. You can't slap the school for the blind in the face like that." So then, there was a tussle over that and you got the Lions involved. Ultimately, it passed; but one of the things that it did for sure, if there had not been bad blood between the Commission for the Blind and Vinton, there certainly was now. They wouldn't let our librarian go up there anymore. I mean, they just began to tell their students, "You don't want anything to do with…When you graduate from here, you don't want anything to do with that Commission for the Blind;" so we heard anyway.

Hicklin: Right.

Witte: So, that then went on for…I mean that ill feeling went on for a good many years. I think the only thing that probably changed it was that, what was occurring roughly at the same time was that more and more…The kids who were considered to be normal blind kids were going to their hometown schools, and therefore, it didn't make that much difference anymore. But, it was too bad. Jernigan made one other effort; that was late '60s, very early '70s, maybe '70, that he asked to have…You remember this. You were here, I think. He asked to have the school for the blind taken out from the Board of Regents and put under the Commission for the Blind. And, that was a bloody battle; and he lost it.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: You remember that?

45:00

Hicklin: I remember stories. I think it was prior to my coming, a few months.

Witte: I wasn't here when it happened. I was living in Montana when it happened, but I knew it was happening. And, I think he would have gotten it, maybe gotten it in one house, but he couldn't get it in the other one. You know, the Lions Clubs were taking sides and there were people in the legislature who may have been friends or neutral or who were not becoming friendly, and so the decision ultimately was made. Governor Ray got into the act and I think that he asked for a compromise, that the fight be settled. So, it was settled and to this day the school for the blind is still under the Board of Regents.

Hicklin: Yes.

Witte: And, since it's really not much of a school for the blind anymore; it doesn't make much difference. But, there was a time when it would have been helpful, to all concerned, if it had been under one program. Anyway, that's the revolution in the field of work with the blind, aside from the fact that we haven't talked about what the organizations of the blind had to do. If you have any other questions about anything I've covered, don't hesitate.

Hicklin: It sounds like we need to do a part two, after you get back from vacation.

Witte: Could be.

Hicklin: If you're willing?

Witte: One other person that I know of that could probably maybe do a better job with talking about the organizations, though I'm not sure, but I think he would, is Ed Sheppard. Ed Sheppard knows more about the workings of the organizations than I do. I just know that…Well, I can tell you some of the early stuff; like I can tell you…I told Louise Duvall the other day, that today I admit [remember] that we used to go to the state convention of the…when I came in it was the IAB, Iowa Association of the Blind, and then it changed its name the NFBI [NFB of Iowa].

Hicklin: Would that have been based, then, in Vinton at the time?

Witte: Well IAB wasn't based anywhere; it was the state organization, but they always had their national convention at Vinton. Basically, in truth, it was a organization of alumni of the school for the blind, right? But, you know, the thing that we haven't gotten into, like when I started today, was that you had a division in the blindness community in Iowa just as you had a division between this place and Vinton. But, you had a division between the older blind people and the new breed, the people who bought the revolution, which caused a lot of ill feelings and, again, was damaging to some

people. That was unfortunate and that has to do with the organizations all the way through. Well, I'll leave you with this; maybe in '61 or '62, because the Commission for the Blind went to the state convention at Vinton...it was the natural place to have it, I guess. We went there and, by that time, we had a fair number of graduates of the center. And, you had, in effect, kind of a taking the gate away from the stairway event, only it was worse.

A guy, I can't remember who all they were, but a lot of the people who had gone through the Orientation Center had learned or believed that the old approach had cheated...been wrong and that the old blind guys who weren't using long canes and were walking around. If you went to Vinton...your question about how did these guys get around? They trained [they "formed" trains]. It was almost laughable; well, it was kind of sad, but lets say that six or seven of the older blind guys were there at the convention; they would get somebody...The guy with the most sight would be in front, and it would be like a chain. They were all arm after arm. There would be this chain of people arm to arm going down the sidewalk. Well, that's what they were used to.

So, the newer guys, the Neil Butlers and some of the others who had gone through the Orientation Center, who were not long time blind guys, by and large, said they didn't like that. So, the upshot is back in '62 or '63, at the election, the old timers had elected their own officers for years and years and there was kind of a little click of guys who would always assume leadership; and they were good people and some of them were pretty...you know, some of them were pretty good chiropractors and did well; and one thing and another, and all of a sudden when the voting was over with, Neil Butler's the President, somebody else from that group

was the Vice President and the old guys are all gone; they all lost their places. Now, that was not good news to them and it wasn't necessarily good news for us. That's a different story. Well, I'm going to go home.

52:06
(End of Recording 2)

Beverly Tietz
2-27-11